



## **PRE- AND POST TREATMENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONTOUR TRL RESURFACING**

Contour TRL is touted as the safest skin treatment laser, especially for being so darn effective. The laser removes the top layers of skin, layers that make us look older, and the depth of removal can be customized by your provider. Your provider will be able to determine the right amount of energy needed to treat your skin with Contour TRL's micron precision. This is especially useful if you have more trouble areas of damaged skin on areas of your face, neck, chest, or arms. Not only will the laser remove dead epidermis layers but this process helps the skin to promote new collagen. Collagen is what makes our skin look and feel smoother, refreshed, and tighter—which is especially useful for sagging skin. During recovery, new healthy skin cells will grow, replacing the dry uneven skin that is robbing you of your otherwise youthful appearance.

### **Pre Treatment:**

- It is recommended that all patients having resurfacing treatments done around the mouth have an oral antiviral agent to prevent any cold sore virus getting into the treated areas. Valtrex 500 mg twice a day to start 1 day before treatment and continue on for 5 days post treatment (7 days total).
- Please discontinue any products containing active ingredients 7 days prior to treatment, such as: Retinol (Retin-A, Tretinoin, Vitamin A), Glycolic Acid, Salicylic Acid, AHAs (Alpha-hydroxy acids), LHAs (Lipo hydroxy acids) and Benzoyl Peroxide. Avoid hydroquinone for 3 days before your treatment. If you have any questions about your current skin care products, please call our office 312-638-4979
- Please show up to your treatment appointment with no makeup on.
- Avoid sun exposure (including tanning beds) for at least 14 days prior to treatment. Avoid sunless tanning creams or sprays on the treated area for 14 days prior.
- Do not wax or use depilatory creams on the treatment areas for 14 days prior to treatment.
- Avoid Aspirin, Motrin, Ibuprofen, Fish Oils, Vitamin E, and other blood thinners 5-7 days before your treatment. If you are on a prescribed blood thinner, please contact our office at 312-638-4979
- Please bring a wide brimmed hat with you on your treatment day to protect your skin when you leave the office.

### **What Can I Expect After TRL Laser Resurfacing?**

- There will be a mild to moderate amount of discomfort associated with the surgery. This should be easily controlled with oral medications. Tylenol with codeine (or equivalent if allergy to codeine exists) is generally always sufficient for pain control. Occasionally using a medication to help you sleep may be useful for the first 7 to 10 days after the surgery. After the surgery pain should really not be a major problem for you. The resurfaced skin often



feels like it has been sunburned. As long as it is not allowed to dry out you should experience only slight pain, if at all.

- The discomfort and pain should begin to significantly decrease after 72 hours. A significant increase in pain after this period should prompt you to call the office. Severe pain is rare; if you experience this, please contact us immediately.
- Bruising and swelling are to be expected after the surgery. These symptoms will peak within the first 36 to 48 hours after surgery, and will gradually subside over the next 7 to 10 days. To minimize the swelling you should sleep with your head elevated for 3 weeks after the surgery
- It is not unusual to have some slight drainage for the first few days after surgery. This will most often significantly improve or disappear by the end of the first week.
- Prior to resurfacing, most patients should be on Retin-A, a Glycolic acid skin regimen and a Vitamin C skin preparation for a minimum of 4 to 6 weeks. This treatment plan is important in optimally preparing the skin prior to surgery, in order to provide you with the best result possible. In addition, dark haired, dark eyed patients may also be placed on a pigment gel to help redistribute and stabilize the pigment cells of the skin. These medications may all be purchased at the office. Information, as to how and at what times to use the different preparations, will be provided to you.
- It is of utmost importance to tell your provider ahead of time if you have ever been on Accutane, received radiation therapy to the head or neck, taken steroids or immunosuppressive agents.
- Immunosuppressed patients (HIV positive, chemotherapy, AIDS etc.) and patients with certain autoimmune disorders are not good candidates for this procedure as the risks of poor healing and infection leading to permanent scarring are much higher. It is mandatory that you inform your provider if you have any of these conditions before any laser surgery.

**CALL THE OFFICE PROMPTLY IF YOU NOTE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- development of a temperature elevation exceeding 100.0 degrees.
- significant pain which is not easily relieved by taking your prescribed medication.
- development of cold sores, or small blisters on the resurfaced skin.

If any of the above should occur after regular office hours, do not hesitate to reach us through the answering service. For whatever reason, if you notice one of the above changes and cannot reach us at our office or through the answering service, present yourself to the emergency department for evaluation. **Chicago clinic 312-638-4979**

**HOW DO I CARE FOR MYSELF AFTER SURGERY?**

- Make arrangements to have someone drive you to, and from, your surgery.
- Having someone stay with you on at least the first night after your surgery is highly recommended.



- Be sure to fill your prescriptions before your surgery since you have to start taking some of the medications prior to the procedure. You will receive an antiviral, an antibiotic, pain pills and hydrocortisone cream. If you wish to have a few sleeping pills, as well, you should ask your provider to give you a prescription.
- **You should also purchase the following supplies prior to TRL resurfacing:**
  - a fresh 2 liter bottle of plain, white vinegar.
  - a generous supply of gauze sponges from the local drug store.
  - Benadryl tablets (25 mg). These are available without a prescription.
  - a large container of Vaseline or Aquaphor.

### On The Day of Procedure

- Arrive for your surgery in loose, comfortable clothing. Your top should button or zip rather than pull over your head.
- Use the medications only as prescribed by the office. Start taking the antiviral and antibiotic on the night before your surgery. After the surgery, try to avoid taking the pills on an empty stomach or at the same time, in order to avoid stomach upset.
- Do not take any aspirin or any anti-inflammatory compounds for 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after your surgery unless you first discuss it with your surgeon. If you have only mild discomfort, you may use plain Tylenol (acetaminophen). Otherwise, you may use the pain pills that were prescribed for you.
- If you are a smoker, you should not smoke for at least 2 weeks prior to surgery and 3 weeks after surgery. Smoking and chewing tobacco inhibit your circulation and can significantly compromise your surgical outcome.
- You should thoroughly wash your hair with an antibacterial shampoo (such as Hibiclens) or soap (available in drug stores) the night before surgery. You may also be given a prescription for antibiotic ointment before surgery. If so, apply a small amount to the inside of the nose three times a day for three days prior to surgery.
- After the laser surgery, the treated areas will be covered with ointment. You may notice some clear or yellow oozing from these areas for up to 7 days after the surgery. This is normal and expected.
- It is critically important to keep the treated areas moist at all times. They should never be allowed to dry and form crusts.
- For the first 24 hours after the surgery, simply keep reapplying ointment (Vaseline or other ointment as prescribed by the office) to keep the treated areas moist. It is not necessary to start soaks until after the first 24 hours have elapsed. Now, using the gauze sponges, soak the treated areas with a solution of 1 tablespoon of white vinegar mixed with 1 cup of clean, cool water. Do the soaks for 20 to 30 minutes at a time. You should find the soaks to be soothing. If the solution is irritating for some reason, the vinegar may be diluted by half (one half a tablespoon of vinegar to one cup of water). The soaks should be repeated 6 times per day, until the skin is fully epithelialized. This will generally take 7 to 10 days.
- After each soak, either Vaseline or other prescribed ointment, should be liberally applied to the treated areas. Do not pick or otherwise remove crusted areas. Do not allow the treated areas to dry out or scab over.



- It is not uncommon to experience some itching as the treated skin heals. This commonly occurs between 5 to 7 days. Hydrocortisone cream may be applied to the itchy areas before applying the ointment. You may also use Benadryl to ease the itch (follow product instructions). Note that Benadryl will cause sedation. It should generally not be used at the same time as sleeping pills or pain pills. If in doubt, ask your pharmacist. It is not unusual for patients to get itchy at night while they are sleeping. This can cause scratch marks on the healing skin that will slow healing. Wearing bulky mittens (with no finger pockets) to bed may decrease this problem.
- Sleep with the head elevated for 3 weeks after surgery.
- Between 2 weeks and 2 months after the surgery, it is not uncommon to note the presence of what look like white heads on the treated areas. These are, in fact, milia. They represent areas where fresh epithelium has overgrown the underlying glands. They may be gently scrubbed and removed. If you are having trouble removing them, we will be happy to help you in the office.
- You should do no vigorous exercise and should avoid any significant physical exertion, lifting or straining for a minimum of 2 weeks after your surgery, as this activity could disrupt your wound healing. Plan on taking it easy.
- Do not rub or massage your face until after you are examined and told it is all right to do so. Likewise, do not wear make-up until your surgeon says that it is all right to do so. Generally, you will be able to cover the treated areas with make-up within 7 to 10 days. At this time the skin will be fully resurfaced (no weeping, blistering or breaks in the skin) and soaks will no longer be necessary. You will find that make-up is somewhat more difficult to apply to the treated areas. They are, in fact, so smooth, that the make-up will often almost slide off. We will suggest certain products if you are having this problem
- Contact lenses should not be worn for the first 10 to 14 days after laser surgery to the eye area, as placing them into your eye may put some strain on your healing face.
- You should avoid the sun and use a sunscreen with at least SPF 15 for six months after laser surgery. Sun exposure may lead to hyperpigmentation or excess darkening of the treated areas. Although, this is generally treatable with pigment gels, they may take a while to work. Therefore, avoid the sun. If at all possible. Broad rimmed hats are also quite useful in this regard.
- Your skin will be bright red after the procedure. This is to be expected. The redness will gradually fade and begin to return to a more normal color around the third week after surgery. However, some residual pink or light red color will persist for 6 to 12 weeks. The length of time it will take for a complete return to normal coloration is variable. Generally, persons with red hair or freckles will be red for somewhat longer periods of time than other people.
- Retin-A, glycolics and vitamin C preparations should not be used after the surgery until you are told by your provider that it is all right to do so. Generally, you should start back on this regimen 4 to 6 weeks after the surgery. This should be a gradual process. The Retin-A should be started first and used alone for 2 weeks. Then, the glycolics should be added 2 weeks later. Finally, the vitamin C preparation is added a further 2 weeks after that. Using this skin care regimen will enhance your surgical results and help restore damaged skin. You will notice that the treated skin looks smoother and generally more youthful at 2 to 3 weeks after the surgery. It will look even better in a few months as the effects of the laser act to slowly tighten the skin's collagen.



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## **RECOVERY TIMETABLE**

Approximate recovery after laser resurfacing surgery is as follows:

**DAY 1** Return home. keep treated areas moist by reapplying ointment or Vaseline frequently. Face is swollen, bruised and bright red.

**DAY 2** Maximum bruising and swelling. start soaks with vinegar. Apply ointment after soaks. Repeat 6 times per day.

**DAYS 5-7** Bruising starting to go away. Skin is being resurfaced. Discomfort much less. May start to itch (use hydrocortisone cream and Benadryl®).

**WEEKS-10** Usually the skin is fully resurfaced by now. May stop using soaks, and may start using make-up (once told by your provider).

**WEEKS 6-12** Redness usually faded by now.

**3 MONTHS** Enjoy your result and avoid the sun. You should be back on Retin-A, glycolic acid and the vitamin C preparation.